

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-06

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NSCE-00 DODE-00 PRS-01 SAB-01 L-01 SSO-00 /037 W

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R 080857Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4795

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 3806

LIMDIS

BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MOPS, EG, JO, XF

SUBJECT: CANAL REOPENING AND JORDANIAN REACTION

1. WE HAVE HAD A FEW MINUTES TO TALK WITH JORDANIAN CHIEF OF STAFF, LT GEN BIN SHAKER, WHO REPRESENTED JORDAN AT SUEZ CANAL REOPENING. SHAKER IS NOT NECESSARILY A POLITICAL ANALYST, BUT HE IS VERY CLOSE TO KING AND RIFAI AND GENERALLY WELL-INFORMED ABOUT MIDDLE EAST POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS.

2. SHAKER SAID THAT JUNE 7 HE HAD OPPORTUNITY FOR DISCUSSION WITH GENERAL GAMASY. DURING THAT DISCUSSION HE REFLECTED TO GAMASY HIS OPINION ON HIS TALKS WITH EGYPTIAN FRIENDS DURING CANAL REOPENING TRIP TO EGYPT THAT: (A) EGYPTIANS SEEM TO BE EXPECTING THAT PEACE IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER, AND (B) EGYPTIANS ALSO APPEAR TO BELIEVE THAT NEW WAVE OF ECONOMIC PROSPERITY IS ABOUT TO ENGULF THEM. FURTHER, BIN SHAKER SAID HE TOLD GAMASY (HE ADDED SOMEWHAT UNDIPLOMATICALLY) THAT HE PERSONALLY THOUGHT  
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SADAT WAS A MUCH BETTER AND MORE SIGNIFICANT LEADER

FOR EGYPT THAN HIS PREDECESSOR HAD BEEN. GAMASY APPEARED TO AGREE STRONGLY WITH THE POINTS BIN SHAKER MADE. SHAKER ALSO TOLD US THAT HE THOUGHT EGYPTIANS WERE BEING HIGHLY UNREALISTIC BOTH ABOUT THE POSSIBILITIES FOR A REAL PEACE AND ALSO ABOUT THEIR ECONOMIC FUTURE. HIS OWN IMPRESSION WAS THAT EGYPT WAS NOW CAUGHT UP, AT LEAST THE SENIOR LEVELS OF ITS LEADERSHIP, IN A WAVE OF EUPHORIA WHICH FAILED TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE TOUGH REALITIES IN THE AREA.

3. BIN SHAKER SAID THE AMERICAN NAVAL PRESENCE WAS BOTH A SURPRISE AND VERY PROMINENT. SINCE HE IS A STRONG ADMIRER OF THE AMERICAN MILITARY, HE MENTIONED PARTICULARLY THE FACT THAT THE US MILITARY PRESENCE WAS SELF-CONTAINED WITH ITS OWN SAILORS, BOATS, ETC., AND THAT THE EGYPTIANS MADE A MAJOR EFFORT TO KEEP AMERICANS WELL FORWARD IN THE CEREMONIES.

4. AS FOR THE SYRIANS, THE REPRESENTATION WAS AT THE LEVEL OF AN ASSISTANT OR DEPUTY TO THE DEFENSE MINISTER TLAS. BIN SHAKER SAID THAT HE WAS REASONABLY COMMUNICATIVE, BUT DID NOT RESIST MAKING A FEW PRIVATE DIGS AT THE EGYPTIANS ON HIS OWN. GAMASY HAD TOLD BIN SHAKER THAT IN A RECENT TALK WITH SHIHABI, THE LATTER HAD INDICATED THAT ONE DIVISION HAD ALREADY BEEN MOVED TO THE IRAQI BORDER AND THAT ANOTHER WOULD FOLLOW. WHEN GAMASY HAD ARGUED THAT PULLING TROOPS AWAY FROM THE BORDER WITH ISRAEL WAS NOT A GOOD IDEA, SHIHABI EMPHASIZED THE DEPTH OF THE SYRIAN CONCERN WITH THE UNPREDICTABLE IRAQIS.

5. THE IRAQIS WERE ALSO PRESENT, BUT REMAINED VERY UNCOMMUNICATIVE AND WERE VERY RETICENT IN CONTACTS WHERE BIN SHAKER HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO OBSERVE THEM. PICKERING

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